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100th Anniversary

1851 —— 1951

Holdeman Mennonite Church

Wakarusa, Indiana

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Centennial Memorial

HOLDEMAN MENNONITE CHURCH

Wakarusa, Indiana

1851 — 1951

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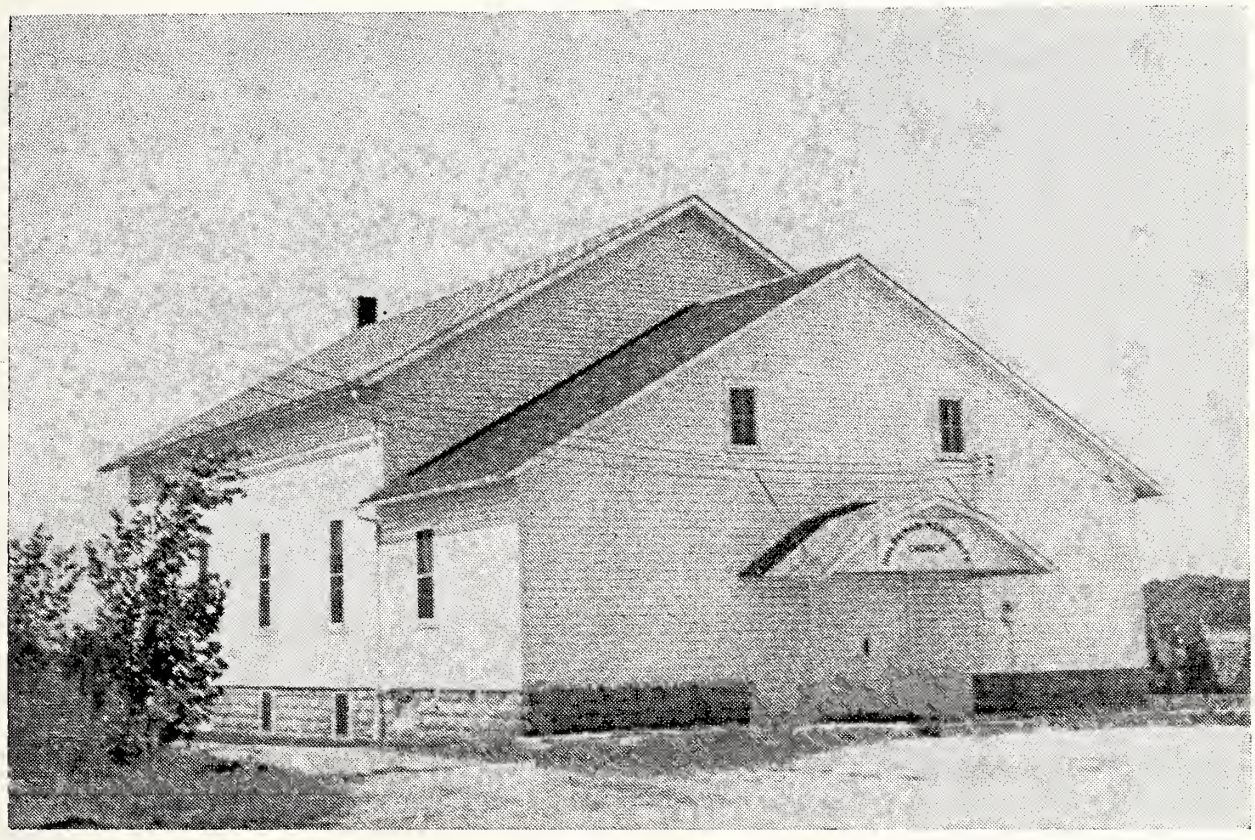


Photo by Everett Freed.

I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord. Psalm 122:1.

I will sing of the mercies of the Lord for ever: with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations. Psalm 89:1.

INTRODUCTION

At the first meeting of the Holdeman Church Council for 1951, a committee was elected to make arrangements for the observance of the Centennial of the congregation. Those elected were George Lapp, Maynard Weldy, Simon Hartzler, Manford Freed, and Robert Gongwer. In the second meeting of the council, Simon Gingerich was elected to serve in the vacancy left by Brother Lapp. In the latter part of August, it was decided that a centennial booklet would be of interest to our people. Space and time did not allow for all details in this work, but we trust that in it much will be found to bring joy to the reader.

We bring to you in this booklet a review of the events relating to the history of the Holdeman Mennonite Church. There are reasons beyond number for profound gratitude to God for the evidence of grace through the years. At this time we are thinking of the one-hundred years just past; and we are emphasizing the blessings of our own congregation as it was founded and lived by faith, hope, and trust in the Lord. To those of past generations, we express our thanksgiving for our heritage and desire that we may "Arise, and Shine" for today and the future, that all generations, which are now and yet to come, may raise their voices in praise to God for His great love manifested through His Son, Jesus Christ.

—Robert L. Gongwer, Editor.

REV. AND MRS. SIMON GINGERICH

Brother Gingerich, pastor of the congregation, was ordained at the Holdeman Church November 12, 1950, by Bishop George J. Lapp. We gratefully acknowledge his zeal in service for God and the church. Under his leadership may we press on together in the service of Jesus Christ our Lord.

33765

THE PASTOR SPEAKS

(Summary of sermon delivered September 16, 1951)

Arise, Shine!

"Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of Jehovah is risen upon thee. For, behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but Jehovah will arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And nations shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." Isaiah 60:1-3.

Dear Christian Friends,

While the words of our text were spoken centuries ago, their message is pertinent in our generation. There is no one of sober mind who will deny that darkness, even gross darkness does cover the earth. There is the darkness of ignorance, the darkness of sorrow and pain, and the darkness of sin.

The unlettered of primitive circumstances patronize their scheming witch doctors, throw their children into sacred rivers as sacrifices to their gods and die on long religious pilgrimages to supposedly sacred schrines, etc. We say, what folly, what ignorance, what darkness of mind. But schooled people have built great intricate machines only to be devoured by the creations of their own minds. They have power at their disposal but no moral control over the use of that power. They build a better mouse trap only to catch themselves and their children in their own instrument of destruction. Again we cannot but say, what folly, what ignorance of true values, what darkness of heart and mind!

Space does not allow for a discussion of the darkness of sorrow and pain except to call attention to the heart aches that are suffered by the victims of war—with employment gone, homes blasted, children starving, pureity violated, hope—for such without Christ what is there to hope for. What darkness!

And finally there is the darkness of sin in the world. Sin darkens the mind and heart. Sin destroys taste for that which is pure and right. Sin separates the person from God, the only source of light.

The prophesy of Isaiah is fulfilled, "behold darkness shall cover the earth . . ." But Isaiah also says, "Thy light is come, the glory of Jehovah is risen upon thee" therefore arise shine! He speaks to us. Arise, shine! If we

of the Holdeman church are in any true sense Christians, then by the miracle of the New Birth we are light! If we are light we are able to shine, we are bound to shine, we shall want to shine!

The text promises that our shining can and will be effective in the world. If we look about us we can see some growth of the kingdom of light in the world. Men and women are being won for the Lord. Inroads are being made into the darkness of sin, sorrow and ignorance. Yet we look with some disappointment upon the impact of our light upon the world. "Nations shall come to thy light . . ." Are you satisfied with the rate of progress of the fulfillment of such hopes! The secret of growth in the work of the Christian Church is the effectiveness of the light. Has the glory of the Lord so drenched and saturated your person and life that men and women see the light of the living Lord in your life? Are the fruit of the Spirit the significant characteristics of your life? Has the love of Christ constrained you to dedicate all the powers of your life and the resourses of your property to the great work of redeeming men from darkness? Jesus gave His all; and His light continues to shine in darkness! Can He count on your light?

Arise, shine!

—Rev. Simon Gingerich.

Present Deacon Brother and Sister
Manford Freed

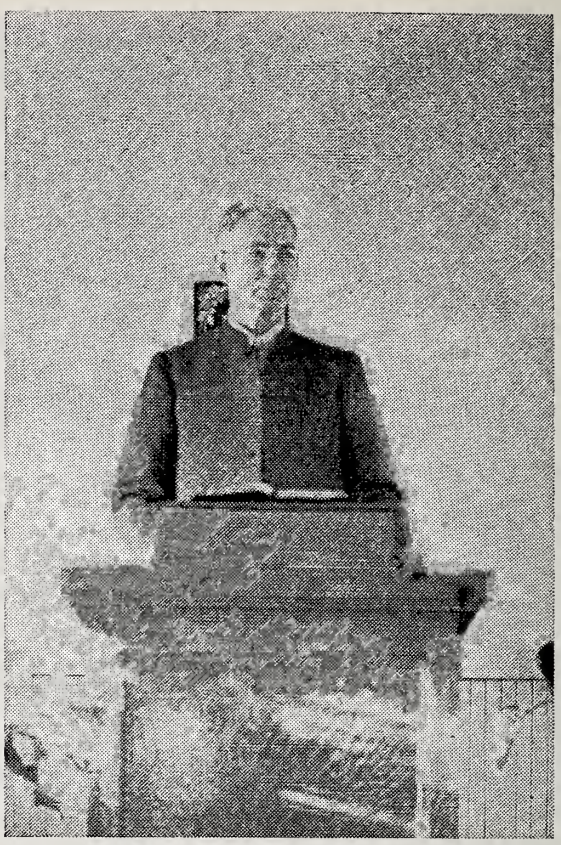
Retired Deacon Brother and Sister
J. I. Weldy

Bishop and Mrs. D. A. Yoder

Present Bishop
Rev. and Mrs. Lee
J. Miller

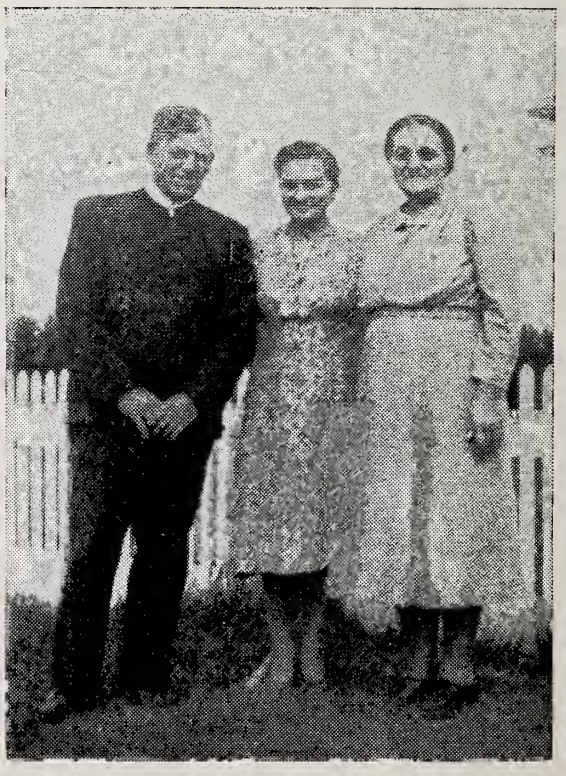
Bishop and Mrs. George J. Lapp

(1854)
REV. JACOB A. BEUTLER



REV. J. K. BIXLER

REV. AND MRS. HENRY WELDY



REV. AND MRS. WARREN SHAUM
AND DAUGHTER

A CENTENNIAL HISTORY OF THE HOLDEMAN MENNONITE CHURCH

Lloyd V. Conrad, historian

The first Mennonites to settle in the western part of Elkhart County came from the state of Ohio. In 1843, John Smith from Medina County, Ohio, came to Elkhart County, Indiana, purchased a farm and then returned to his home in Ohio.

Two years later, in the fall of 1845, he and his son Joseph settled on the farm he had purchased earlier. In the spring of that same year, Bishop Martin Hoover, his son John Hoover, and Christian Henning with their families came also from Medina County, Ohio, and settled in Harrison Township. Jacob Strohm had already settled here before they arrived. In the spring of 1848, Christian Christophel, Jacob Christophel, and Jacob Wisler with their families settled in the same township, having come from Columbiana County, Ohio. During the summer of 1848, twenty-four more families arrived from Wayne, Medina, Columbiana and Mahoning counties in Ohio. Most of these had originally come from Pennsylvania as pioneers to the state of Ohio. These early settlers held their first church service on Ascension Day, 1848 in a school house about a half mile north of the present village of Southwest. There were sixteen people present at this first service in which Jacob Wisler, a minister, delivered the principal address. Bishop Martin Hoover who was rather feeble because of his age (being 88 at the time) made only a few remarks. Jacob Christophel, also a minister, probably took some part in the service as was traditional among Mennonites at that time. There was no singing of hymns as there was no one present who was able to lead. Following this first meeting, regular church services were held every two weeks. In the summer of 1849, a log meeting house was built at the present location of the Yellow Creek Mennonite Church.[1] Soon after the organization of the congregation the aged Bishop Martin Hoover ordained Jacob Wisler to the office of bishop.[2]

Among the twenty-four families who came to Elkhart County in 1848 were the George Holdeman and the Frederick Landis families who settled in Elkhart Township.[3] Frederick Landis was married to Catherine Holdeman, a sister of George.[4] With them also were Frederick Landis' widowed mother, his brother Jacob and family, and his nephew Joseph Landis. This Joseph Landis later (1870) located in Wakarusa and married Christiana Freed.[5] In the fall of 1849, the George Holdeman family located in Olive Township on a farm which was purchased from the government. At about the same time, the

1. **Illustrated Historical Atlas, Elkhart County, Indiana,** (Chicago: Higgins, Belden and Co., 1874), p. 8.
2. Allen B. Christophel "History of the Yellow Creek Mennonite Church" **Christian Monitor** XXIV (August, 1932), 238.
3. Edwin L. Weaver, **Holdeman Descendants,** (Nappanee: E. V. Publishing House, 1937), p. 22, 235.
4. Ibid., p. 285.
5. Abraham E. Weaver (ed.), **A Standard History of Elkhart County, Indiana,** (Chicago: The American Historical Society, 1916), p. 873.

widowed mother of George Holdeman, Christiana Buzzard Holdeman with her nephew Christian Shaum, and her younger children John, Susannah and Abraham came from Wayne County, Ohio, and located in Baugo Township. John, having married in 1847, was accompanied by his wife and small daughter.[6] John Davidhizar, a young man of Mennonite parentage from Butler County, Pennsylvania, who purchased land in St. Joseph County. Indiana, in 1848, also came with the widow Christiana Holdeman. Later he married a daughter of Jacob Landis (who had settled in Elkhart Township in 1848) and then united with the church.[7] During the following year (1850) the Samuel and Joseph Holdeman families also made the trek from Wayne County, Ohio, to Elkhart County, Indiana, the latter coming late in the fall.[8] The next spring (1851) Abraham Weldy. whose wife Nancy was a daughter of Margaret Holdeman Yoder Freed, left Holmes County, Ohio, for Elkhart County, Indiana. Besides his wife and one child, he was accompanied by his father, John Weldy and family, and his wife's sister. Elizabeth Yoder. In November of this same year Elizabeth Yoder married Henry Smeltzer who had come from Richland County, Ohio, in 1849 with his parents. Michael Smeltzers.[9] During the year 1851, the John Weldy family located in St. Joseph County.[10] In the fall of 1851, the David S. Holdeman family and the Jacob Freed families also joined this westward migration of the Mennonites, coming from Wayne County. Ohio, to Elkhart County, Indiana. Jacob Freed had made the trip in the spring with the Weldy families in order to invest in land and then returned to Ohio to bring the entire family to this community. The David Holdeman family returned to Ohio in 1856 and then moved to Kansas in 1873.[11] Others who arrived in these early years included David Lechlitner who came from Richland County, Ohio, before 1851, for in March of that year he was married to Susannah Holdeman; the Peter Loucks family came in 1851 from Wayne County, Ohio; the Valentine Hartman family came from Ashland County, Ohio, in 1848; the Adam Hartman family came from the same county in 1849.[12] The Mark Tintsman family located in Locke Township in 1851.[13] The John Culp family settled in the community in the same year or soon afterwards and a number of other families within the next year or two.[14]

All of these early settlers were members of the Yellow Creek Congregation as it was the only organized congregation at that time—services were held there every two weeks. On alternate Sundays the ministers would arrange for services in schoolhouses or in the homes of the members who lived some distance from Yellow Creek. The George Holdeman home which was located

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6. Edwin L. Weaver, **op. cit.,** p. 236, 16, 455.
7. Enos L. Davidhizar, Personal Interview, September 29, 1951.
8. Edwin L. Weaver, **op. cit.,** p. 319, 351.
9. Ibid., p. 138, 121.
10. Abraham E.Weaver, **op. cit.,** p. 799.
11. Edwin L. Weaver, **op. cit.,** p. 107, 377.
12. Ibid., p. 143, 196, 261, 473.
13. "Obituaries: Mark Tintsman" **Herald of Truth,** XIX (December, 1882), 190.
14. J. K. Bixler "Sketch of the Holdeman Mennonite Congregation" **Rural Evangel,** VI (October, 1924), 1.

southwest of the present town of Wakarusa was one of these homes in which services were held regularly every four weeks. As more and more new settlers located in the area near this home, the need for a meeting house became apparent. In the summer of 1851, a lease was secured to the plot of ground on the east side of the road from the present church building and a log church was erected.[15] Joseph Holdeman, who had arrived just the previous October, and who was an experienced carpenter, was in charge of the construction.[16] The building was about twenty-four by thirty-four feet in dimensions with the narrower side toward the road. The entrance was on the west end and there were two windows on each end and three on each side. At first the room was not ceiled, neither was there any provision for heating the building. The pulpit desk which consisted of a plank with legs fastened into it was at the east end of the room—it could hardly be called a pulpit desk for it did not stand upon a pulpit—there was no raised platform or pulpit as we have today. The benches made from slabs had no backs. Some years later the house was sided, shutters were placed upon the windows, the room was ceiled, and a stove was placed in the middle of the room. The deed for the plot of ground was granted in 1854 for one dollar. On June 27, 1866, the congregation purchased for $100 the plot of ground on the west side of the road, that on which the present building stands. The plan was to use the land on the east side of the road for a cemetery. Only a few burials were ever made, however, and the idea of a cemetery was later abandoned. The present frame church house on the west side of the road was first erected in 1875 with Jacob Link as the head carpenter. While the construction was in progress, using the old log church as a work shop, the regular church services were held in the Bunker Hill United Brethren Church at Wakarusa. As first built, the present structure had an assembly room forty by forty-two feet in dimensions, with two cloak rooms and a hall at the east end. This building was first heated with two large room heating stoves located on the north side and the south side of the assembly room at about the middle of the room lengthwise. Since there were no evening meetings at this time, no lighting system was installed. Sometime between 1890 and 1895 the first lights (kerosene) were installed in the church in order to make possible evening services. Some years later a gas lighting system was installed.[17] In the late summer and fall of 1913, this building was enlarged and remodeled. The entire structure was raised and a basement constructed underneath. The two heating stoves were removed and a furnace was installed in the basement. The cloak rooms and hall were removed from the original structure and placed in the new addition on the east end.[18] The building was wired for electricity and electric lights were installed. While this remodeling program was in progress, regular Sunday services were held in the North Union Church, about a mile

15. Ibid., p. 1.
16. Edwin L. Weaver, **op. cit.**, p. 352.
17. S. C. Hartzler, Personal interview, September 28, 1951.
18. Bixler, **op. cit.**, p. 1.

and a half southwest of the Holdeman Church.[19] In 1941 the water pump which was south of the building was removed and an electric water pressure system was installed and rest rooms constructed underneath the cloak rooms. In the winter of 1946-47, the floor of the assembly room was sanded and finished, and a new pulpit desk and chairs were purchased. During the summer of 1950, a new ceiling and new light fixtures were installed in the assembly room; and during the past summer (1951) a new furnace (an oil burner) was installed and the basement remodeled in order to provide classrooms for the Primary-Junior Department of the Sunday School. Early in the history of the church, sheds were constructed for shelter for the horses and buggies and wagons which were used as the means of transportation to and from church services. As late as 1916 the question of building additional sheds on the east side of the road was considered. The coming of the automobile, however, made the sheds unnecessary and no more were constructed. In 1941, all of the sheds to the north of the church were removed and in the spring of 1949 the row of sheds to the west of the church was also removed; thus disappeared the last evidence of the era of the horse and buggy as the means of travel to and from church.

The first trustees of the church were Abraham Weldy and John Holdeman. In the earlier years of the congregation, trustees were chosen to serve for their entire lives but later a three-year term was established for the office of trustee. However, most of the trustees have served more than one term. Of the first two trustees, Abraham Weldy served in this capacity until a short time before his death in January 1909; John Holdeman served until 1866 when he moved to Clinton township. At that time, Cyrus Flickinger, who had come from Mahoning County. Ohio, in 1864, was elected to succeed John Holdeman.[20] Sometime after 1854, Daniel Freed was elected as a third trustee; after his ordination to the office of deacon he was succeeded by John Good who came to the community from Fairfield County, Ohio, in 1880.[21] Elsewhere in this booklet are listed the names of all those who have served as trustees with their dates of service.

No record has been found of the first church services in the Holdeman Church, but it can be safely assumed that it followed the traditional pattern for Mennonite services of the time. Since the Yellow Creek congregation was the only organized Mennonite congregation in the western part of Elkhart County at this time, it is obvious that the first ministers to serve the Holdeman congregation were the ministers from Yellow Creek. For a number of years there was no clearly defined division of the two congregations, as ministers and members alternated at the two places of worship, but Yellow Creek was the place at which baptismal and communion services were held. The Mennonites west of Goshen were all considered as one congregation with two places of worship.

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19. **Church Secretary's Record of Minutes of Annual Business Meetings,** p. 4.
20. Bixler, **op. cit.,** p. 1.
21. Davidhizar, **op. cit.,** see also Edwin L. Weaver, **op. cit.,** p. 364.

However, by 1875 the separation into two distinct congregational organizations had been well established.[22]

The ministry of the Yellow Creek church at the time of the building of the first log church at Holdemans one hundred years ago included Bishop Jacob Wisler and minister Jacob Christophel who were referred to in the first paragraph of this dissertation. Another minister by the name of Benjamin Hershey had moved into the community in 1850, coming from upper Canada; in 1860, however, he moved on to Whiteside County, Illinois, and later (1870) to Shelby County, Missouri, where he was ordained to the office of bishop.[23] Daniel Moyer, who had come to Elkhart County in 1849 from Ashland County, Ohio, was ordained to the ministry at Yellow Creek about 1850; this aggressive and able minister met death very suddenly in a railway accident in Michigan in 1864 while on his way to Canada in church work.[24]

Jacob Freed who came to this community in the fall of 1851 had been ordained to the ministry about 1837 in Holmes County, Ohio, and served the Holdeman Church in that office until his death in 1868.[25] Daniel Brundage, an ordained minister from York County, Ontario, moved to Elkhart County in 1858; he served as a minister here, until he moved to Morgan County, Missiouri, where he was ordained a bishop. Later he moved on to Kansas where he was active in the organization of new churches among the settlers there. In 1889 he returned to Elkhart County to live with relatives; he was recognized a bishop here, but was not very active because of his age.[26] The first deacon in the congregation was John Oyer who later transferred to the Evangelical Church.[27] This probably took place before 1860, for in that year Joseph Holdeman, who supervised the construction of the first church building, was ordained to the office of deacon.[28]

In 1864, a very capable young minister by the name of Daniel Brenneman came into this community from Fairfield County, Ohio. Because of his enthusiasm for more aggressive church work, he became involved in a controversy with the conservative bishop, Jacob Wisler. "The friends of Wisler charged that Brenneman was vain of his popularity, disrespectful of the bishop, overbearing in his disposition and ambitious for place and power. The friends of Brenneman charged that Wisler was envious because of his co-worker's superior ability and greater popularity."[29] The controversy continued to grow until it was brought under investigation by the conference, and Wisler, because the decision went against him, withdrew from the church and took with him a number of followers. John Bear, a minister, and John Troxel, a deacon, from

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22. Christophel, **op. cit.**, p. 1.
23. "Obituaries: Benjamin Hershey" **Herald of Truth,** XXV (April, 1888) 63.
24. J. S. Hartzler and Daniel Kauffman, **Mennonite Church History** (Scottdale: Mennonite Book and Tract Society, 1905), p. 275.
    See also Daniel Hauffman, **Mennonite Cyclopedic Dictionary,** Scottdale: Mennonite Publishing House, 1937), p. 254.
25. Edwin L. Weaver, **op. cit.,** p. 107, 110.
26. "Obituaries: Daniel Brundage" **Herald of Truth,** XXXIII (February, 1896), 30.
27. Bixler, **op. cit.,** p. 1.
28. Edwin L. Weaver, **op. cit.,** p. 352.
29. Hartzler and Kauffman, **op. cit.,** p. 340.

the Holdeman congregation stood with Wisler and, as a result, their services in the congregation ended in 1871.[30] This left the ministry of the congregation with Joseph Holdeman as deacon, Daniel Brenneman as minister and Jacob A. Beutler who had been ordained to the ministry in 1868 just four years after he had moved into the community from Ohio. Following this division, John M. Brenneman from Ohio had bishop oversight of the congregation until October 1872 when Jacob A. Beutler was ordained to the office of bishop.[31]

Daniel Brenneman, the capable and popular minister, however, was impatient with the slowness with which the Mennonite churches entered into aggressive Christian work, and decided that it was futile to wait, that the church was bound by conservatism to such an extent that she would not change. So in 1874, he left the Mennonite Church, taking with him a number of followers, to start a new church which was known for a number of years as the Mennonite Brethren in Christ Church, and now as the United Missionary Church.

From about 1874 to about 1881, James Culbertson served the congregation as a minister. He left, however, to start a church of his own, but gaining few if any followers, he served the Bunker Hill United Brethren Church for awhile and later joined the Mennonite Brethren in Christ, but did not remain with that group permanently. About 1880, Joseph Holdeman, upon receiving considerable criticism in regard to his service as deacon, frankly said that if the congregation did not want him to serve as deacon, he would take his seat with the members and stay there. Thereafter he no longer served the congregation as deacon, but remained a member of conference in the office of deacon.[32] Soon after this episode, Daniel Freed was ordained in 1881 as deacon to assist Jacob H. Wisler who had also been ordained as deacon in 1873.[33]

During the last year of his life (1886), Bishop Beutler ordained Abraham Culp to the office of deacon, Amos Mumaw to the office of minister and Henry Shaum of the Olive congregation to the office of bishop. The following year 1887, Bishop Shaum ordained Jacob O. Loucks to the office of minister—Loucks, however, never was active in this position.[34] In 1898, Amos Mumaw returned to his former home near Wooster, Ohio, and continued his ministry there. In 1889, Henry Weldy was ordained to the ministry and served the congregation for many years. During the earlier years of his ministry he also served the mission outpost at Teegarden.

In 1892, because of Bishop Shaum's failing health, he ordained John F. Funk of the Prairie Street Congregation to the office of bishop.[35] Funk was well known throughout the church as the editor of the *Herald of Truth* and through this church paper had wielded considerable influence. In 1893, Funk ordained John Hygema to the ministry for the Holdeman congregation;

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30. Bixler, **op. cit.**, p. 1; also Davidhizar, **op. cit.**
31. Bixler, **op. cit.**, p. 1.
32. Davidhizar, **op. cit.**
33. "Obituaries: Jacob H. Wisler," **Gospel Herald,** I (December, 1908), 575.
See also "Obituaries: Daniel Freed," **Herald of Truth,** XXXV (January, 1898), 14.
34. J. K. Bixler, Letter to S. C. Hartzler, preserved in Church Secretary's Record Book.
35. Bixler, "Sketch of the Holdeman Mennonite Church," **op. cit.**, p. 2.

Hygema served until 1907 when he went west on account of his health and then died in California. Following the death of the deacon, Daniel Freed, in 1897, Samuel Smeltzer was ordained to that office by Bishop Funk. Bishop Funk was a very capable church leader, but became involved in difficulties in his home church which led to his removal from the office in 1902. I. J. Buckwalter from Ohio then served temporarily as bishop. J. S. Shoemaker of Freeport, Illinois, was ordained bishop in 1902, and then had the bishop oversight of the congregation until 1904 when David Burkholder of the Nappanee congregation was ordained to that responsibility. J. K. Bixler, who was ordained to the ministry in that same year, was ordained a bishop in 1907 to assist Bishop Burkholder. D. A. Yoder, who was ordained to the ministry in 1907 and transferred to the Olive congregation the following year was also ordained in 1910 to assist in the bishop oversight. From 1907 to 1913, the bishop responsibilities in this congregation were shared by Burkholder and Bixler; from 1913 to 1919, these duties were shared by Bixler and Yoder. From 1919 to 1949, however, D. A. Yoder carried the responsibility alone. In 1908, Bishop Burkholder ordained to the ministry, Silas Weldy, who gave a long period of service, not only to the congregation but also to the church at large, having been active in the organization of the district mission board and for many years served on the executive committee of that board. He also served on the executive committee of the Sunday School Conference. In 1913, Bishop Burkholder ordained J. I. Weldy to serve in the capacity of deacon. He was also active in promoting good singing in the church, having taught singing schools, not only in the home congregation, but in many other places as well. In 1934, Eli Christophel, who had been ordained a deacon at Cullom, Illinois, and had transferred to this congregation was elected to assist in those duties here; and in 1950, Manford Freed who had been ordained to that office at Brutus, Michigan, and had returned to this congregation in 1931, was elected to serve as deacon. In 1936, Warren Shaum was ordained to the office of minister by Bishop Yoder.[36]

In December of 1949, after a long period of faithful service as bishop, D. A. Yoder resigned that responsibility in this congregation. With the assistance of the executive committee of conference, the congregation then elected George J. Lapp, formerly a missionary to India, to serve as bishop and pastor. The long years of experience on the mission field and in other church work were of untold value to him in guiding the church through a critical year. In November 1950, he ordained Simon Gingerich, formerly of Parnell, Iowa, to the ministry; and then in January 1951, after a year of much appreciated service, he answered the call of God to serve Him in the better land. In February 1951, again with the help of the executive committee of conference, the congregation faced the task of choosing another bishop. At that time, Lee J. Miller was elected to serve in that office. He, and Simon Gingerich as

36. **Church Secretary's Membership Record Book**, pp. 1-71.

minister, and Manford Freed as deacon now carry the responsibility for the leadership of the congregation.

The Holdeman congregation was a member of the Ohio Mennonite Conference until October 14, 1864, when the first Indiana Mennonite Conference was organized.[37] For a number of years, however, there was very close cooperation and exchange of ministerial help between the two districts. At the time of the Wisler division, a group of six bishops from Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Canada was called in to investigate the difficulty and hold a "church trial," which led to Wisler's removal from the office.[38] Bishop oversight was in charge of an out-of-state bishop temporarily until the ordination of a local minister to that office. Repeated efforts to reunite the two factions of the Wisler division met with failure. Again in connection with the difficulties in 1901-2, a number of bishops and ministers from other states were called in to help settle the difficulties. In 1917, the Indiana Michigan Mennonite Conference merged with the Indiana-Michigan Amish Mennonite Conference. In 1923, another division took place in several congregations of the conference district, but did not affect the Holdeman congregation.

The first Sunday School was held in the old log church about 1872. Jacob A. Beutler, bishop and Joseph Holdeman, deacon were two of the first superintendents. It seems that the object of these early Sunday Schools was to teach the German language in order to preserve its use in the church. Pupils who could read German used the German New Testament for their studies, while those who could not read German were taught the German alphabet and first elements of reading. Attendance was largely children at first, for Sunday School was considered a children's affair. For the first twenty-five years, the Sunday School was held only during the summer months, and often interest died out during the hot weather. The Sunday School in the summer of 1894 with Henry Davidhizar as superintendent and Isaac Witmer as assistant has been remembered as having been a very successful one. The year 1897 with Charles Link as superintendent and Henry Davidhizar as assistant was the first that Sunday School was maintained throughout the entire year. Elsewhere in this booklet is a list of all who have served in the office of Sunday School Superintendent—the names are listed in the chronological order of the first term of service as accurately as it was possible to ascertain this order. In 1895. the International Uniform Lessons were adopted, three years after the Mennonite Publishing Company of Elkhart began publishing these lesson helps. During the early years of the congregation regular Sunday services were held every two weeks. Since the turn of the century, regular services (Sunday School and preaching) have been held every Sunday except for a few occasions. The change from the German to the English language came gradually and with less difficulty than in some other congregations.[39] Early in the history of the

37. **Minutes of the Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference,** 1864-1929, (Scottdale: Mennonite Publishing House), Preface.
38. Christophel, **op. cit.,** 238.
39. Bixler, "Sketch of the Holdeman Mennonite Congregation," **op. cit.,** p. 2.

Sunday School, a library was established—in 1897 a librarian and an assistant were elected. The Sunday School Secretary's Record Books have not all been preserved, so it is not possible to determine the exact date when the library was started. In 1915, a separate department in the basement was begun for the children.[40] The fiscal year of the Sunday School had always coincided with the calendar year until 1949, when the fiscal year was changed to begin October 1 and end September 30 in order to conform with the recommendations of the Commission for Christian Education and Young People's Work of the Mennonite General Conference.[41]

A Summer Bible School was first conducted here in the summer of 1923. This, however, cannot be considered a permanent beginning for in later years none was held. A few years ago, Summer Bible School was again revived.

The Holdeman congregation was host for the first regular sessions of the Mennonite General Conference held in 1899.[42] The congregation has also entertained many times the Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference, more frequently in the earlier years than in recent years. The Sunday School Conference (now known as the Christian Workers Conference) has also convened here on several occasions.

There is some difference of opinion as to the time of the first revival meetings and the evangelist. This difference of opinion may arise from different interpretations as to how many consecutive evening services are necessary to be considered a series of revival meetings. Three of the first evangelists to serve here were J. S. Coffman, Christian B. Brenneman and Andrew Shenk—each of these are reported to have conducted evangelistic services at Holdeman in the years 1894 and 1895. During the first twenty years of the twentieth century, Bible conferences followed by a series of evangelistic meetings were held almost every year and sometimes more frequently. The congregation during its history has assisted with the work in several mission outposts; namely, Teegarden, Union Chapel (Madison Township) and Mishawaka. The last named was a cooperative venture of the Holdeman, Olive, and Prairie Street congregations and was started as a result of discussions in the joint semi-annual Sunday School meetings of the three congregations which were first held in 1910. This mission work in Mishawaka was later discontinued.

Young Peoples Bible Meeting (Sunday evening meeting) was first started in 1896 in spite of some opposition, but was discontinued soon afterwards.[43] Sometime later it was reorganized and has continued to the present. In the summer of 1922, the Young Peoples Literary Society was first organized and amid some uncertainties continued until 1925. In 1927 it was reorganized and has continued to the present. Since then the organization has also been affiliated with the Northern Indiana Literary Convention and its successors the Indiana-Michigan Literary Convention and the Indiana-Michigan Mennonite

40. **Church Secretary's Record of Minutes of Annual Business Meetings**, p. 5.
41. Ibid., p. 57.
42. Ibid., p. 1.
43. Bixler, "Sketch of the Holdeman Mennonite Congregation", **op. cit.**, p. 2.

Youth Fellowship. The history of the young people's organization in the local congregation indicates periods of great enthusiasm, as well as periods of near death. In December 1950, the organization voted to invite the newly ordained minister, Simon Gingerich, and his wife to serve as sponsors of the group. This indicates the change of attitude on the part of the ministry toward the youth organization from opposition to tolerance and now finally to cooperation.

From the "Church Secretary's Membership Record Book", evidence is gathered to list ordained men in other congregations who at one time were members of the Holdeman congregation. Isaac B. Witmer, who was one of the early Sunday School superintendents later moved to Ohio where he was for many years a minister in the Leetonia congregation. Amos Weldy after transferring to the Berea congregation in Davis County, Indiana, was ordained to the office of deacon; Samuel B. Metzler, after transferring to the Salem congregation was ordained a deacon. Ray F. Yoder soon after his marriage transferred to the Salem congregation where he was later ordained to the ministry and more recently has been ordained to the office of bishop. Francis Freed, who is a minister in the Salem congregation, was first a member at Holdeman. James Bucher, a few years after uniting with the church here transferred to Kouts and was ordained to the ministry for that congregation; he has served in various other places since then. Andrew J. Miller who is now a deacon in the Olive congregation was formerly a member here. Abram Hartman in his youth united with the Holdeman congregation and later transferred to the Yellow Creek congregation where he now serves as deacon. From November 1915 to June 1916, Dr. and Mrs. George Troyer were members of the Holdeman congregation. After several years in Chicago, they spent several terms in the India mission field and are now serving in the mission in Puerto Rico.

During the hundred years of the Holdeman Mennonite church a number of significant changes have taken place. In the first place, there were practically no young people in the church during the early years, with no activities in the church for the young people; today, there are in the church a large number of alert, active, and interested young people and the church has accepted the responsibility to provide church activities for them. In the second place, Daniel Brenneman was mistaken when he thought that the church was so bound by traditional conservatism that she would not change. He lived to see the day when the church he had left had so changed that she had practically reached the ideals which he had in mind in 1872. The church today is an active aggressive church, interested in spreading the Gospel to the four corners of the earth, and liberally contributing finances for the work of the church. Instead of numerically declining in membership, there is now an increasing membership. In the third place, there have been changes in our practice, in our ways of living the Christian life, but there have been no changes in the basic doctrinal beliefs of the church. In certain aspects, there is a stronger conviction and a more absolute testimony against some of the social evils of the world. The Lord has been "our help in ages passed, our hope for years to come."

CENTENNIAL PROGRAM

Holdeman Mennonite Church

Sunday, October 14, 1951

9:30 A.M. Sunday School ..... Maynard Weldy, Superintendent

10:30 A.M. Worship Hour

Missionary Sermon ..... John H. Mosemann

12:00 Fellowship Dinner

2:00 P.M. Song Service and Devotions

History of Holdeman Mennonite Church .. Lloyd Conrad

Reminiscences

7:00 P.M. Song Service and Devotions

"From Zurich, Switzerland, to Elkhart County, Indiana" ..... Harold S. Bender

"Forward With Christ" ..... John C. Wenger

* * * * * * *

"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Revelation 22:17.

ORDAINED MEN WHO HAVE SERVED THE HOLDEMAN CONGREGATION

BISHOPS:	Born	Died	Ordained	Served From	Served To
Jacob Wisler	1808	1889	1848	1851	1871
John M. Brenneman	1816	1895	1849	1872	1872
Jacob A. Beutler	1833	1886	1872	1872	1886
Henry Shaum	1826	1892	1886	1886	1892
Daniel Brundage	1812	1895	1869	1889	1895
John F. Funk	1835	1930	1892	1892	1901
I. J. Buckwalter	1870	1950	1895	1902	1902
J. S. Shoemaker	1853	1936	1902	1902	1904
David Burkholder	1835	1923	1904	1904	1913
J. K. Bixler	1877	1939	1907	1907	1919
D. A. Yoder	1883		1910	1913	1949
George J. Lapp	1879	1951	1928	1949	1951
Lee Miller	1907		1945	1951	

MINISTERS:					
Benjamin Hershey	1814	1888	1844	1851	1860
Daniel Moyer	1812	1864	1850	1851	1864
John Bear	?	?	?	?	1871
Jacob Freed	1796	1868	1837	1851	1868
Daniel Brundage	1812	1895	1840(?)	1858	1868
Daniel Brenneman	1834	1919	1857	1864	1874

Ministers (Cont'd):	Born	Died	Ordained	Served From	Served To
Jacob A. Beutler	1833	1886	1868	1868	1872
James Culbertson	?	?	?	1874(?)	1881(?)
Amos Mumaw	1852	1906	1886	1886	1898
Jacob O. Loucks	1867	1893	1887	1887	1887
Henry Weldy	1862	1934	1889	1889	1934
John Hygema	1864	1908	1893	1893	1908
J. K. Bixler	1877	1939	1904	1904	1907
D. A. Yoder	1883		1907	1907	1908
Silas Weldy	1877		1908	1908	
Warren Shaum	1891		1936	1936	
Simon Gingerich	1923		1950	1950	

DEACONS:

John Oyer	?	?	?	?	1860(?)
John Troxel	?	?	?	?	1871
Joseph Holdeman	1823	1894	1860	1860	1880(?)
Jacob H. Wisler	1833	1908	1873	1873	1908
Daniel Freed	1830	1897	1881	1881	1897
Abraham Culp	1838	1910	1886	1886	1910
Samuel Smeltzer	1857	1933	1898	1898	1933
J. I. Weldy	1871		1913	1913	
Eli Christophel	1868	1949	1909	1934	1948
Manford Freed	1900		1925	1950	

SUNDAY SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS

Jacob Beutler
Joseph Holdeman
Abraham Weldy
John Holdeman
Henry Holdeman
Christian Holdeman
Daniel Freed
John Burky
Isaac Witmer
Charles McClintic
John Witmer
Henry Hygema
John Hygema
Henry Davidhizar
Charles Link
Menno Weaver
Jacob Bixler
David Yoder
Silas Weldy
Amos Weldy
Harry Holdeman
Warren Shaum
Edwin Weaver
Clarence Smeltzer
Samuel Weldy
Fred Stichter
Phares Wenger
Maynard Weldy
Paul Burkey

TRUSTEES

Abraham Weldy, 1851-1908
John Holdeman, 1851-1866
Daniel Freed, 1855(?)-1881
Cyrus Flickinger, 1866-1931
John Good, 1882-1918
Amos Weldy, 1909-1911
Henry Wenger, 1915-1938
Jacob Wisler, 1919-1930
William Weaver, 1931-1933
Carl Nunemaker, 1932-1942
Maurice Gongwer, 1934-1948
Cornelius Weldy, 1939-1947
John Yoder, 1943-1946
Otis Davidhizar, 1947-
Forrest Metzler, 1948-
Russel Blosser, 1949-

SECRETARIES

Simon Hartzler
Phares Wenger
Robert Gongwer

Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.

—Paul, the Apostle.

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